



Richmond Grays RG #1, RG#2 and RG#3
Original Media - Ambrotype

In Memorium
Arthur F. Loux
1944-2013

“Glimpsing a Shadow from Richmond”
John Wilkes Booth and the Richmond Grays

A continuation of the research presented in
“Has he been Hiding in Plain Sight” (2010), updated in “Out of Hiding” (2011),
“Bound for Glory” (2012) and “Chasing Shadows 150 Years Old, Part One: Chasing a Shadow
from Richmond” (2013)

By Angela Smythe
Date: March 30, 2014

"He left Richmond and unsought enrolled himself as one of the party going to search for and capture John Brown. He was exposed to dangers and hardships; he was a scout and I have been shown a picture of himself and others in their scout and sentinel dresses¹."

¹ Clarke, Asia Booth. The Unlocked Book: A Memoir of John Wilkes Booth by His Sister. New York; G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1938. Pgs.111-112

*Asia's Photograph –
John Wilkes Booth's "Shadow from Richmond"*

The most significant and comprehensive recollection of John Wilkes Booth known to date was secretly written and locked away in 1874 by his sister, Asia Booth Clarke. Within its suppressed pages, Asia recalled her demonized brother, John Wilkes Booth, as a human being. It was Asia's hope that in some distant day when her words would finally be unlocked and published, her recollections would “make [his] name less hated.”



Richmond Grays (RG#1)
Seen in positive orientation as a print (photograph)
VHS 2010.1.38 (Virginia Historical Society)

When the above remarkable photograph was first published in 1911², its misidentification in print as Confederate Volunteers obscured its true provenance, and the men's identities were a mystery. But as Asia's recollection tells us, to his family, John Wilkes' presence in such a picture was never a mystery.

Since 2009³ I have sought the picture that Asia described in her book, an elusive shadow from Richmond, the picture of Asia's brother, John Wilkes Booth proving his fealty to Virginia, serving in uniform while deployed with the Richmond Grays at Charles Town in 1859 in the aftermath of the John Brown Raid.⁴ Ironically, the most promising picture found to date that fits her description has become the most iconic and widely recognized group photograph representing the American Civil War.

Ideally, finding a print of RG#1 with a documented provenance to John Wilkes Booth would conclusively "unlock" RG#1 as the picture Asia described. Absent

² Miller, Francis Trevelyan, Sampson, Lanier, eds., Semi-Centennial Memorial, The Photographic History of the Civil War, In Ten Volumes. New York: The Review of Reviews Co., 1911. RG#1 image located in Volume One, Opening Battles, Pg. 145
<http://archive.org/details/photographichist01inmill>

³ Antebellum Richmond, "*Has He Been Hiding in Plain Sight? John Wilkes Booth and the Richmond Grays*", Angela Smythe, Web. 10 May 2010
<http://www.antebellumrichmond.com/hiding.html>

Antebellum Richmond, "*Out of Hiding – John Wilkes Booth and the Richmond Grays*", Angela Smythe, Web. 10 May 2011 <http://antebellumrichmond.com/out-of-hiding.html>

Antebellum Richmond, "*Bound for Glory, John Wilkes Booth and the Richmond Grays, the Journey to Charles Town – 1859*", Angela Smythe, Web. 10 May 2012
<http://antebellumrichmond.com/bound-for-glory.html>

Antebellum Richmond, "*Chasing Shadows 150 Years Old – John Wilkes Booth and the Richmond Grays, Part One; Chasing a Shadow from Richmond*", Angela Smythe, Web. 10 May 2013
<http://antebellumrichmond.com/chasing-a-shadow-from-richmond.html>

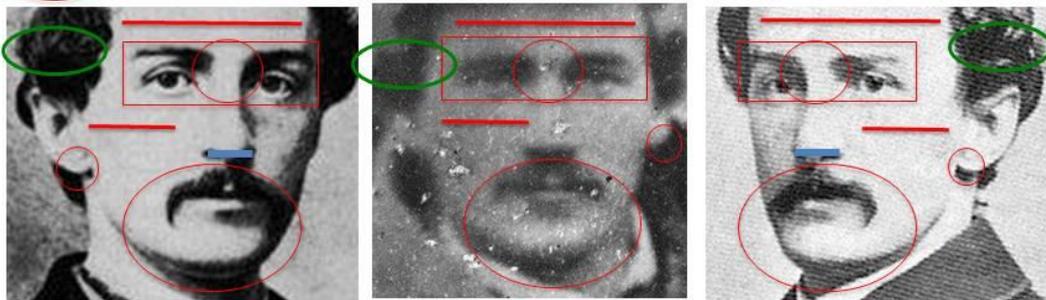
⁴ "*When the John Brown raid occurred, Booth left the Richmond Theater for the scene of strife in a picked company with which he had affiliated for some time. From his connection with the militia on this occasion he was wont to trace his fealty to Virginia.*"⁴ Townsend, George Alfred. The Life, Crime and Capture of John Wilkes Booth. New York: Dick & Fitzgerald, 1865. Pg. 22

such a finding, the next best thing would be to find another description of a picture of John Wilkes Booth taken while at Charles Town containing additional information consistent with what is seen in RG#1 and a provenance leading to John Wilkes Booth.

“Glimpsing a Shadow from Richmond,” will document an additional description of just such a photograph, confirmed in writing by Mrs. Ella Mahoney, whose close association with the Booth family is uncontested. At late as 1937, Mrs. Mahoney both saw and possessed that picture, a photograph that described John Wilkes Booth being in a group of uniformed men, center rear, a description that is consistent with where the man who bears a remarkable similarity to him is seen in RG#1.

John Wilkes Booth, A Forensic Facial Analysis on untouched images

-  Forehead span
-  Eyebrows/Eyes
-  Distance between eyebrows, nose ridge
-  Breadth of Cheek
-  Forward facing earlobe
-  Chin, bottom lip (Note: mustache notch matches pre 1860 timeframe)
-  Adjust for flat light on exterior pose (RG#1)
-  Hair flip indicative of curly hair



JWB Studio Pose
Gutman Collection
Gutman #4 (cropped & flipped)
Pre 1860

JWB from RG# 1
Exterior Pose, Group of men at
Harper's Ferry, Circa 1859
(2010.1.38) (cropped)
Virginia Historical Society

JWB Studio Pose
Gutman Collection
Gutman #32
Post 1860

With my special thanks

First and foremost, I am deeply indebted to Professor Terry Alford for directing me to Mrs. Ella Mahoney's (1858-1948) annotated copy of Izola Forrester's book, This One Mad Act, housed at the Historical Society of Harford County; and to

Tom Fink, President, Junius B. Booth Society, who provided me with Mrs. Mahoney's actual written annotation and invaluable additional research, without whose contributions catching this additional glimpse of Booth's shadow from Richmond would not have been possible. And lastly, my special thanks to Mrs. Ella Mahoney, for her words which allowed this glimpse to be seen.

Glimpsing a Shadow from Richmond

Izola Forrester (1878 – 1944), born Izola Louise Wallingford, was a prolific writer, a pioneering early 20th century woman author, magazine and newspaper journalist, and a noted early screenwriter of silent films. However today, she is best remembered for authoring the last of her 20 books, This One Mad Act⁵, a memoir of her mother's and grandmother's alleged familial relationship as the daughter and wife of John Wilkes Booth.⁶ Just like a silent film screenplay, Forrester's fantastic tale weaves a tapestry of melodrama, intrigue and conspiracy. The cornerstone of its incredible plot rests upon the claim that John Wilkes Booth survived his documented death at the Garrett farm in the early morning hours of April 26, 1865⁷.

On page 345 of This One Mad Act, Forrester mentioned three photographs found in her grandmother's Bible that to her were pivotal to the book's plot. The third photograph she described as **“a group of men in uniform, with John Wilkes Booth in the center rear.”** Following this statement and within the context of the paragraph Forrester then made an obtuse reference to a “revelation” in the order of the photographs and a link to the “K. G. C.”

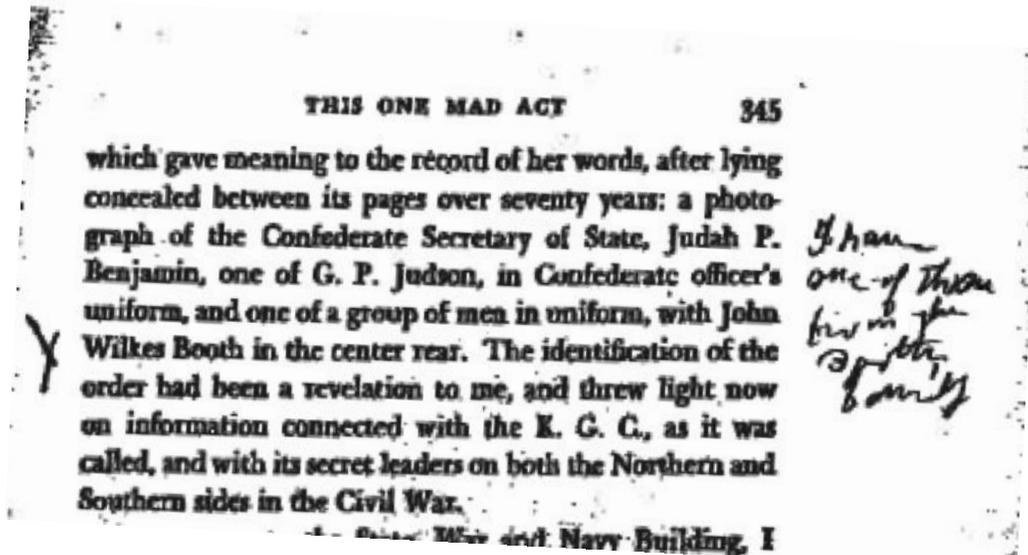
Forrester's obtuse description, “revelation” and subsequent photograph provided almost 30 pages later within the book would be of no value to history except that Mrs. Ella Mahoney owned a copy of Forrester's book. And when Mahoney read

⁵ Forrester, Izola, This One Mad Act, The Unknown Story of John Wilkes Booth and his Family by his Grandaughter, Hale, Cushman & Flint, First Edition, 1937.

Notably; Izola Forrester's grandmother, Martha Lizola Mills D'Arcy Davenport Stevenson: 1837-1887 and her two children; Izola's mother, Ogarita Henderson: (b. 1859 – 1893) and Izola's uncle, John ‘Harry’ Jerome Stevenson: (b. 1870/71 – 1919)

⁷ IBID. For a brief synopsis of her claims, see Preface

her vague description on page 345 of “**a group of men in uniform, with John Wilkes Booth in the center rear,**” Mrs. Mahoney interpreted it, in the context of her own knowledge and experience, to refer to a copy of a photograph that she herself had received from the Booth family. This is evidenced by her checkmark next to this statement and her startling note written in the margin, “*I have one of these from the Booth Family.*”



From a scan of page 345 of Mrs. Ella V. Mahoney’s copy of This One Mad Act
Held by the Historical Society of Harford County
Kindly provided by Mr. Tom Fink
Booth Historian and President of the Junius B. Booth Society

Some thirty pages later, on two unnumbered pages between pages 372 and 373, Forrester provided the photograph described earlier. Underneath the photograph was the caption, “*It is a picture of Knights Templars*” (see p. 373)



On pages 372-373 Forrester would further tie this photograph back to her earlier obtuse description that had prompted Mrs. Mahoney's written comment.

“I have this little photograph from my grandmother's Bible – that group of men in uniform with Booth in the center. I thought it was of the order of the Knights of the Golden Circle, as I had been told. But it is not. It is a picture of a group of Knights Templars.”

Tom Fink and staff at the Historical Society of Harford County confirm that Mrs. Mahoney in her copy of Forrester's book provided no notations on these later pages, nor did she refer anywhere else in the book to the photograph she possessed other than on page 345. Outside of that note, no other written comments left by her mentioning this photograph have been located in the Society's holdings.

Could the Forrester photograph (which appears on two unnumbered pages between pages 372 and 373) and description on pages 372-373 somehow be the same one that Mrs. Mahoney received from the Booth family, and thus the one she referred to when she wrote her comments on page 345?

The documentation provided in *“Glimpsing”* will answer a resounding *NO*. But thanks to Forrester's obtuse description, Mrs. Ella Mahoney confirmed in writing that she herself, sometime between 1937 when Forrester's book was published and her death in 1948, had in her possession a photograph given to her by the Booth family which contained John Wilkes Booth identified as being center rear among a group of uniformed men, a description that is consistent with the man who

resembles Booth seen in RG#1.

***Comparing the Forrester and Mahoney Bona Fides
Vetting the Nonsensical and Documenting the Facts***

The Forrester Photograph's Provenance to John Wilkes Booth

The undated photograph used by Izola Forrester, which appeared between pages 372 and 373 (shown previously), was donated along with a vast amount of Forrester's papers to the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University. Written on the reverse is the note; "*Group of Knights Templar. Ella Stevenson told Izola Forrester that JW Booth is in the center of the 2nd row.*"⁸

From these words, it appears that Stevenson herself did not write the note. It also appears that Forrester did not write these words, but some unknown third person wrote them most likely at the time the items were donated to the Schlesinger Library. Nonetheless, it is clear from Forrester's book that she believed them.

Who was Ella Stevenson - The Booth Connection?

Ella Aretta Wyman in 1894 had married and sometime later divorced Forrester's uncle, John "Harry" Jerome Stevenson, (b. 1870/71 – 1919), whom Forrester in This One Mad Act fantastically claimed was John Wilkes Booth's son, his "child of the escape," born in 1870 and in other accounts, 1871. Any validity to Ella Stevenson's identification of a "J. W. Booth" in that photograph rests solely on the credibility of her claim.⁹

Dating the Forrester Photograph

Forrester's Knights Templar photograph is undated. However, the uniforms of the

⁸ Forrester, Izola L. (Izola Louise), 1878-1944. Papers, 1844-2005 (inclusive), 1883-1944 (bulk): A Finding Aid Call No.: MC 535; photograph is MC 535_57.9-1 located in photographic drawer (PD)#49

⁹ In particular see page preceding Preface to This One Mad Act

Templars were nationally standardized between 1859 and 1886¹⁰. From examining Templar uniforms during this period, the photograph dates to approximately 1880;

The uniforms shown below in the first three photographs date circa 1860 - 1870 and do not match those worn in the Forrester photograph. The fourth photograph hereinafter shown, matches the uniforms seen in Forrester's photograph and was taken 1880 to 1883 or in 1891¹¹. Thus, Forrester's photograph was taken long after Booth's 1865 death.



"Sir Knight" John B. Morris
[Between 1860-1870]
[Library of Congress](#)
Photographed in Nashville, Tenn.
LOT 8940, no. 1 [P&P]

Photograph 1



Unidentified man in Masonic regalia
[Between 1860 and 1870]
[Library of Congress](#)
LOT 8940, no. 19, [P&P]

Photograph 2



"Sir Knight" John Frizzell
[Between 1860-1870] |
[Library of Congress](#)
LOT 8940, no. 5 [P&P]

Photograph 3

¹⁰ See Official Souvenir, 27th triennial conclave, Knights Templar of the United States of America. By Knights Templar (Masonic order). Grand Encampment, Knights Templar (Masonic order). Grand Commandery (Pa.). Executive Committee 1898

¹¹ Photograph is credited to Howe's Portrait Studio Forest, Ohio and according to [Artists in Ohio, 1787-1900: a Biographical Dictionary](#), Howe was only active in Forest between 1880 and 1883 and again in 1891.



A cropped portion of Forrester Photograph's Knights Templars



Photograph 4



Reverse of Photograph 4

Mrs. Mahoney's Photograph's Provenance to John Wilkes Booth
Who Was Mrs. Ella Mahoney - The Booth Connection

In direct contrast with the implausible claims alleged in Forrester's book, Mrs. Ella Mahoney's credentials, with her 70-year ownership of Tutor Hall, the Booth family ancestral home, and her decades long relationship with bona fide members of John Wilkes Booth's family, are unimpeachable and have been well documented by the Historical Society of Harford County. Anyone interested in her life can read more at <http://www.harfordhistory.net/thella.htm> .

How could Mrs. Mahoney have obtained her photograph?

From her own words, we know that Mrs. Mahoney's photograph was given to her by a member of the Booth family, but whom?

The Booth family vacated Tudor Hall in BelAir, Maryland, in the summer of 1857, two years before Asia's picture of her brother John Wilkes was taken in Charlestown. Accordingly, it could not have been left there by the Booth family or in the possession of any subsequent interim tenant prior to Ella Mahoney's and her

first husband's purchase of Tudor Hall in 1878.¹²

Starting from the time that Mrs. Mahoney purchased the property, the members of John Wilkes Booth surviving immediate family consisted of:

Junius Brutus Booth Jr. (Sibling) - 1821-1883
Mary Ann Holmes Booth (Mother) -1800 - 1885
Asia Booth Clarke (Sibling) -1835-1888 (Resided in England 1868 until her death)
Rosalie Booth (Sibling) - 1823 – 1889
Edwin Booth (Sibling) - 1833-1893
Joseph Adrian Booth (Sibling) - 1840-1902

Mrs. Mahoney's note does not say when, the circumstances, or what member of the Booth family gave her the photograph. According to Tom Fink, no answers have been found to date in the collection of Mrs. Mahoney's papers currently held by the Historical Society of Harford County. It is hoped that a recent search request for additional information might produce results from material housed in other archives.¹³ However, Mrs. Mahoney's papers at the Historical Society of Harford County contains correspondence between Mrs. Mahoney and members of the Booth family, in particular with Mahoney's contemporary Edwina Booth Grossman (1861-1938), the only daughter¹⁴ and chronicler of Edwin Booth.¹⁵

Mrs. Mahoney's book, Sketches of Tudor Hall, was released during Edwina Grossman's lifetime, and thus Edwina is a likely candidate to have given her the photograph.¹⁶ It is unknown what contact, if any, Edwina's daughter Mildred

¹² Samuel Alexander Stuart Kyle

¹³ Notably, Booth-Grossman Family Papers, 1940-1953;*T-Mss 1967-001, b. 4 f. 24, Correspondence/Ella V. Mahoney 1925-1940; Bill Rose Theatre Division, The New York Library for the Performing Arts and the Hamden-Booth Theatre Library

¹⁴ Edwina was the only child of Edwin Booth and his first wife Mary Devlin (Booth). Edwin had a son with his second wife Mary McVicker (Booth) who only survived a matter of hours. Edwina was his only surviving child.

¹⁵ Grossman, Edwina Booth, Edwin Booth: Recollections by his Daughter, Edwina Booth Grossman, and Letters to her and to his Friends, New York, The Century Company, 1902

¹⁶ Mahoney, Ella. V, Sketches of Tudor Hall and the Booth Family, Copyrighted 1925, printed

Booth Grossman (1886-1960) had with Mrs. Mahoney, but correspondence exists between Mahoney and Edwina's son, Clarence Edwin Booth Grossman, (1887-1957). In a letter to Clarence dated February 17, 1940, Mahoney requested any unpublished information he would be willing to share with her to include in an intended book she was then researching to combat the damage she feared Stanley Kimmel's soon to be released The Mad Booths of Maryland might have upon the Booth family name.^{17 18}

Where is Mrs. Mahoney's photograph?

To date Mrs. Mahoney's photograph has not been located. Where could it be?

The Historical Society of Harford County houses the bulk of Mrs. Mahoney's papers and possessions including her annotated copy of Forrester's This One Mad Act. To date, no additional references to Mrs. Mahoney's photograph, or the photograph itself, have been located.

By the time of Mrs. Mahoney's death in 1948, RG#1, originally published in Volume One of Miller's Photographic History of the Civil War in 1911, had appeared in print misidentified and replicated as a "Civil War" illustration for almost 40 years. If found apart from Mrs. Mahoney's sole documentation, her handwritten note in the margin of her copy of This One Made Act, someone could have easily assumed it to have been just a copy from that book or any other book in which it appeared and tragically discarded it. It is also possible that the photograph is held by one of Mahoney's descendants, perhaps still separated from the knowledge of her hand written note, which alone identifies it, or that it was amongst those items sold the following year after Mahoney's death, orphaned from

Tudor Hall, Belair, Md. May 1925

¹⁷ Booth-Grossman Family Papers, 1940-1953; *T-Mss 1967-001, b. 4 f. 24, Correspondence/Ella V. Mahoney 1925-1940; Bill Rose Theatre Division, The New York Library for the Performing Arts

¹⁸ In 1938, Mrs. Mahoney's intention of writing a book about John Wilkes Booth appeared in numerous newspaper articles including; *Truth About John Wilkes Booth said known only by an Aged Woman*, Springfield Republican March 6, 1938, *Telling Story of John Wilkes Booth*, Portsmouth Herald, March 8, 1938 and *Death Nearly Ends "Truth" about Historical Villain*, Galveston Daily News, April 3, 1938. Unfortunately, it appears that Mrs. Mahoney's book was never completed.

its provenance.

Lastly, Stanley Kimmel when he stayed at Tudor Hall collecting research for The Mad Booths of Maryland, may have obtained it, assumed it to be a print or a reprint of Miller's "Confederate Volunteers" and discarded it or lost it. The photograph was not located in a search of the Kimmel Collection at the University of Tampa.

Conclusion

I am confident in asserting the following as facts:

- That John Wilkes Booth's sister Asia Booth Clarke saw a photograph that contained her brother with others in mixed military attire, men in "scout and sentinel dress," stemming from Booth's militia participation at Charles Town during late 1859.
- The only known time John Wilkes Booth was photographed in uniform was in a group photograph taken while he served with the antebellum Richmond Grays in late 1859 at Charlestown.
- RG#1 is a photograph taken in late 1859 of a group of uniformed men taken at Charlestown (the majority of them identified as Richmond Grays), who are in mixed military dress, fatigue (scout) and sentinel (cross straps) attire, with a man found in the center rear who strongly resembles John Wilkes Booth.
- Mrs. Mahoney possessed a photograph of John Wilkes Booth, center rear, in a group of uniformed men given to her by a member of the bona fide Booth family, and that it was not the one Izola Forrester referred or included in her book, This One Mad Act.
- RG#1 started as an ambrotype created by Lewis Dinkle at

Charlestown in 1859, but by employing a then atypical processes ¹⁹ was subsequently reproduced in Richmond for the purpose of making paper prints in late 1859 or early 1860 (See previous papers “Hiding” “Out of Hiding”, and “Chasing a Shadow from Richmond”) ²⁰

Based on these facts; I conclude:

Mrs. Mahoney had a photograph of John Wilkes Booth taken in uniform with fellow Richmond Grays at Charlestown that was given to her by a member of the Booth family. Her identification of John Wilkes Booth appearing in center rear is consistent with where the man who looks like Booth appears in RG#1. Further, from these facts, I conclude that Mahoney’s photograph and Asia’s are the same photograph or one of many prints created of it in Richmond late 1859 to early 1860 and that John Wilkes Booth is the man seen center rear in RG#1.

Mrs. Mahoney’s photograph, if found, will conclusively prove the picture Asia saw was RG#1.

Epilogue

The poem *Album Leaves*, whose poignant excerpt appears below, was published a scant two years before Booth’s own “glass” was taken at Charlestown.

¹⁹ This atypical process and its use by actors prior to its acceptance by the general public will be addressed in a future paper: “*Chasing Shadows 150 Years Old, Part Two; Conversations through the Glass.*” Anticipated release: May 10, 2014

²⁰ Antebellum Richmond, “*Has He Been Hiding in Plain Sight? John Wilkes Booth and the Richmond Grays*”, Angela Smythe, Web. 10 May 2010
<http://www.antebellumrichmond.com/hiding.html>

Antebellum Richmond, “*Out of Hiding – John Wilkes Booth and the Richmond Grays*”, Angela Smythe, Web. 10 May 2011. <http://antebellumrichmond.com/out-of-hiding.html>

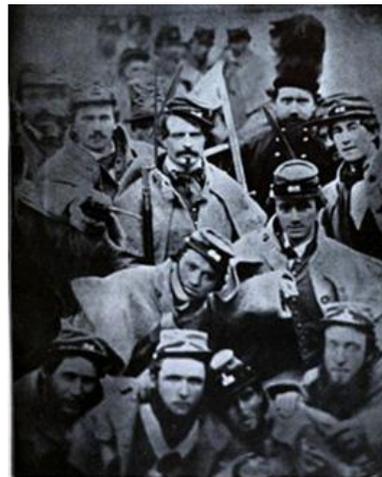
Antebellum Richmond, “*Chasing Shadows 150 Years Old – John Wilkes Booth and the Richmond Grays, Part One; Chasing a Shadow from Richmond*”, Angela Smythe, Web. 10 May 2013. <http://antebellumrichmond.com/chasing-a-shadow-from-richmond.html>

*Yes 'tis a glass! But oh it keeps
Each image that across it sweeps,
As in the magic of Daguerre,
The vision is imprinted there!
How priceless then! – As Memory's friend,
It will its kind assistance lend,
And serve, in after years, to show,
The friends beloved, "long, long ago!"
How blest, sweet one, I then shall be,
If you can "catch a glimpse" of me!²¹*

The research conducted over the past five years has answered the mystery of how RG#1, antebellum Virginia Volunteers at Charlestown ironically transitioned to become the iconic image representing the "Face of the American Civil War." However, a lingering and even more profound mystery remains; ***Out of all possible photographs, why has fate allowed us to "catch a glimpse" of John Wilkes Booth in this particular one?***



RG#1
Original 6th Plate Size Glass
Ambrotype
Owned by William Colavita
Richmond, Virginia



RG#1
From Volume 1
Photographic History of the Civil War

²¹ Meek, Alexander Beaufort, Excerpt of *Album Leaves, Songs and Poems of the South* S.H. Goetzel & Co., 1857

Credits/Acknowledgments

Professor Terry Alford – *Milo Grazie Professore!*

Tom Fink, President, Junius B. Booth Society

Historical Society of Harford County

Art Bagley, University of Tampa Library

Laura Peimer, Manuscript Processor
Caitlin Reeves, Reference Assistant
Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library
On the History of Women in America
Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University

Ray Wemmlinger,
Curator and Librarian
Hampden-Booth Theater Library
The Players Foundation New York

**And to David Smythe, who since day one has pulled
*“Shoulder to shoulder and oar to oar”***